CHAPTER 3
COMMAND RELATIONSHIPS

An MPF is a temporary organization set forth by an establishing authority. At a minimum, it is comprised of a MAGTF with assigned naval forces under the MAGTF CE, and an MPSRON, NAVFOR, and naval forces under the command of the CMPF (see fig. 3-1). Any MAGTF can employ the MPE/S in the MPSRON. Figure 3-1 represents a typical organization for independent operations (see Chapter 1). The organizational structure and command relationships for an MPF operation which augments an amphibious operation will be defined in the initiating directive for the amphibious operation in accordance with JP 3-02, *Joint Doctrine for Amphibious Operations.*

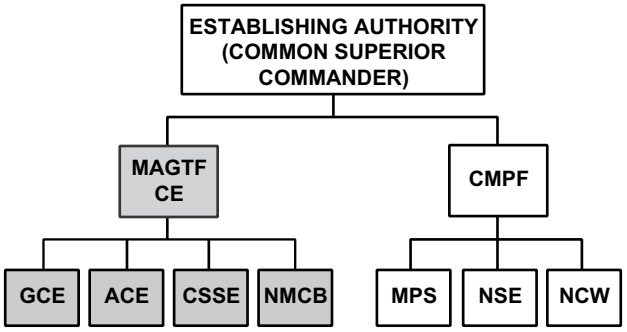

Figure 3-1. MPF Organization (Independent Operation).

The establishing authority may be a combatant commander, an existing JTF commander or a subordinate unified commander. The establishing authority deploys and employs the MPF. As the establishing authority delegates responsibility for the MPF operation and the MAGTF employment mission, it normally has operational control (OPCON) of all assigned forces and the authority to exercise general direction of the supporting effort. Some responsibilities follow:

- Issue the initiating directive.
- Establish command relationships within the MPF.
- Designate the time to start moving the MPSRON and the FIE.
- Approve arrival and assembly and reconstitution plans.
- Coordinate intelligence collection, processing, and dissemination.
- Establish the force protection operations center (FPOC) and designate a force protection officer (FPO) to coordinate and integrate all force protection functions and activities.
- Designate force protection functions to appropriate subordinates. Airward force protection responsibilities may be delegated, retained or subsumed by higher headquarters depending on forces available.
- Approve terminating the MPF operation.
- Coordinate force disposition instructions when the MPF operation is completed.

Tactical Control and Support

There are four command relationships: COCOM, OPCON, tactical control (TACON), and support. COCOM can only be exercised by combatant commanders and cannot be delegated. OPCON, which is inherent in COCOM, can be delegated, as can TACON and support. In MPF operations, the establishing authority may be delegated OPCON or TACON of the MAGTF commander and CMPF by the combatant commander. The establishing authority is responsible for establishing command relationships and the C2 structure for the MPF operation.

The command relationship established between the MAGTF commander and the CMPF is a key decision. It should provide for unity of effort, simplicity, and flexibility across the MPF operation phases. It should be clearly defined and based upon the establishing authority's assessment of

mission requirements. While the establishing authority normally has OPCON or TACON of subordinate forces, the relationship between the CMPF and MAGTF commander is normally supported/supporting. It reflects the same relationship between the commander, amphibious task force and the commander, landing force described in JP 3-02. Where possible, the MAGTF and CMPF should work closely with the establishing authority to ensure the initiating directive reflects the MAGTF/CMPF command relationships best suited for all phases of the operation.

The establishing authority is responsible for ensuring that the supported and supporting commander understand the degree of authority the supported commander is granted (JP 0-2).

MPF MAGTF

An MPF MAGTF is comprised of four core elements: CE, ground combat element (GCE), aviation combat element (ACE), and the combat service support element (CSSE). The MPF MAGTF contains these elements plus the NMCB. The NMCB provides deliberate engineering support to the MAGTF, including major horizontal and vertical construction, facilities repair, and other general engineering support.

CE

The CE is the MAGTF headquarters, consisting of the MAGTF commander and staff. The CE provides C2 and coordination to effectively plan and execute operations by the other three MAGTF elements.

GCE

The GCE is built around an infantry unit. It includes combat support units such as artillery and armor.

ACE

The ACE is task-organized to provide all or part of the functions of Marine Corps aviation based on the MAGTF mission and size. The expeditionary airfield (EAF) is controlled by the ACE. The EAF's primary function is to provide a tactical airfield for Marine Corps aircraft. Secondary missions are to increase the sortie generation rate for carrier naval aviation and provide a terminal for sustainment for strategic and intratheater airlift.

CSSE

The CSSE is task-organized to provide the full range of combat service support (CSS).

NMCB

The NMCB provides a standardized and interoperable construction capability using various packaged equipment modules called T/A-57. T/A-57 contains three core modules (T/A-91), one basic module (T/A-92), and one heavy module (T/A-93). Each core module contains civil engineering support equipment (CESE), tool assemblies, and support gear for 250 Navy construction engineers (SEABEEs). The basic module and one core module contain major vertical construction capabilities. The heavy module and one core module contain major horizontal construction capabilities. The NMCB table of organization and allowance is comprised of T/A-57 plus the FIE. The NMCB can also serve as the forward echelon for a larger NCR deployment.

UCT

The UCT provides trained personnel and equipment to provide underwater engineering, construction, repair, and inspection. UCT deployment is directed by the respective fleet commander via the NCRs. Before an MPS offloads, the UCT can deploy an element of seven personnel and 12 short tons of equipment to inspect piers, beaches, and anchorages for suitability, battle damage, and obstructions before arrival and assembly operations.

Equipment includes the following:

- Underwater weight-handling equipment.
- Underwater construction tools.
- Self-contained underwater breathing apparatus and surface-supplied diving equipment.
- Bathymetric survey equipment.
- Safety equipment.

MAGTF Commander

The MAGTF commander has OPCON of Marine Corps and OPCON or TACON of attached NAVFOR. Responsibilities follow:

- Prepare an arrival and assembly plan in coordination with the CMPF.
- Establish the arrival assembly operations group (AAOG).
- Coordinate with the CMPF on the time-phased arrival of MPF elements and control measures within the AAA.
- Plan and coordinate strategic airlift of the FIE including the NSE.
- In some cases, designate the landward security officer (LSO) or assigns LSO tasks to a subordinate commander.
- Recommend, in coordination with the CMPF, termination of the MPF operation to the establishing authority.
- Establish the movement control center (MCC).
- Assign liaison personnel to the movement control agencies.
- Coordinate embarkation of forces aboard ships, strategic airlift, and intratheater lift.

CMPF

The CMPF is identified in the initiating directive, and has OPCON of all MSC and NAVFOR assigned to the MPF, except those NAVFOR attached to the MAGTF. The CMPF and staff originate from a standing Navy organization complete with C2 capabilities; e.g., amphibious groups, amphibious squadrons or NBGs. Responsibilities follow:

- Coordinate the establishment of an FH with the FH program manager if the MPF mission so requires.
- Coordinate airlift of NSEs with the MAGTF commander.
- Coordinate time-phased arrival of MPF elements and control measures within the AAA with the MAGTF commander.
- Designate the seaward security officer (SSO).
- Coordinate termination of the MPF operation with the MAGTF commander.

Commander, MPS Squadron

An MPSRON consists of a group of civilian-owned and civilian-crewed ships chartered by the MSC loaded with prepositioned equipment and 30 days of supplies to support a MAGTF.

The commander, MPS squadron (COMPSRON) is the principal advisor to the CMPF. Responsibilities follow:

- Provide technical assistance for operations involving the MPSRON.
- Evaluate readiness of assigned ships.
- Conduct MPF planning and operations as directed.
- Conduct C2 training.
- Develop and improve operational procedures for MPSRON support.
- Monitor contractor arrangements for support of assigned ships.
- Develop self-defense/internal ship security and request support.

- Act as the MSC executive agent in base support matters.
- Serve as a consular representative for merchant marine matters.
- Coordinate port service requirements for the MPSRON.
- Support security in the AAA as directed by the CMPF/SSO.
- Arrange refueling of the MPSRON.
- Provide billeting and messing for the offload preparation party (OPP) and offload control unit (OCU).

CNSE

The CNSE commands elements of the NBG, NAVCHAPGRU, and others as assigned. The CNSE and associated staff originate from the NBG, complete with organic C2 capabilities. Responsibilities follow:

- Participate in offload planning and conducting the offload in coordination with the MAGTF commander and COMPSRON.
- Coordinate activities between the beach party team (BPT) and the landing force support party (LFSP).
- Exercise OPCON over United States Marine Corps (USMC) OPPs and debarkation teams provided by the MAGTF.
- Recommend naval reserve augmentation requirements to the fleet combatant commander via the CMPF.

Commander, NCW Unit

The NCW unit is sourced from one of two NCW groups (East or West Coast). It consists of reservists and active duty personnel from USN and USCG units. The NCW unit participates in force protection planning and operations as directed by the CMPF, recommends naval reserve augmentation requirements to the fleet commander via the CMPF, and exercises OPCON over the following subordinate elements comprising the NCW:

- The harbor defense command unit (HDCU) is a deployable command, control, communications, computers, and intelligence (C4I) unit whose core purpose is to provide the harbor defense commander's command center staff. The HDCU uses a reserve-mobile ashore support terminal (R-MAST) system that provides an extensive C4I capability.
- The mobile inshore undersea warfare unit (MIUWU) is a deployable mobile tactical element comprised of surveillance and command, control, and communications (C3), mobility, logistics, and administrative support elements.
- The inshore boat unit (IBU) is a deployable, armed, small craft unit that provides small craft security support.
- The port security unit (PSU) consists of USCG personnel and six deployable, armed, high-speed small craft that conduct harbor defense/port security operations.

Commanding Officer, FH

The FH aboard the MPF is a USN asset. If offloaded and established in the AO, the FH commanding officer will report to that theater's naval component commander. It provides Level III health service support and general medical support through a modular, rapidly erectable 500-bed hospital for all ground forces as coordinated during planning.

Establishing Supported and Supporting Roles

In a broad sense, the CMPF supports the MAGTF. When a support relationship is established, it will typically vary by phase of the

operation per the initiating directive. It is incumbent upon the establishing authority to make clear in the initiating directive the requirements for the supported and supporting mission, and the parameters for transitioning this command relationship. If possible, the CMPF and MAGTF should work with the establishing authority to ensure CMPF/MAGTF relationships reflect those that best support each phase of the MPF operation. It also includes the following:

- Forces and other resources allocated to the supporting effort.
- Time, place, level, and duration of the supporting effort.
- Relative priority of the supporting effort.
- Authority (if any) of the supporting commander to modify the supporting effort in an exceptional opportunity or an emergency.
- The degree of authority granted to the supported commander over the supporting effort.

Likely MPF command relationships, responsibilities, and actions by phase follow.

Planning Phase

The MAGTF commander and the CMPF report to the establishing authority for planning as follows:

- MAGTF commander: OPCON to MARFOR.
- CMPF: OPCON to the naval forces/numbered fleet commander.
- NMCB: OPCON to the MAGTF commander.
- COMPSRON; CNSE; commander, Naval Coastal Warfare (CNCW) unit; and FH commander's report to the CMPF as follows:
  - COMPSRON: OPCON to the numbered fleet commander, ADCON to the COMSC through the MSC area commander.
  - CNSE: OPCON/ADCON to the numbered fleet commander.
  - CNCW unit: OPCON/ADCON to the numbered fleet commander.
  - FH commander: OPCON to the numbered fleet commander.
- MAGTF commander publishes the operation order (OPORD), arrival and assembly plan, and the deployment letter of instruction (LOI). (See app. B for a sample OPORD format and app. C for a sample arrival and assembly format. App. C is prepared by the MAGTF with the CMPF.)
- MAGTF commander and the CMPF coordinate departure of survey, liaison, and reconnaissance party (SLRP) and the OPP.

Marshalling Phase

- CMPF and the MAGTF commander are change of OPCON (CHOP) or TACON to the establishing authority.
- COMPSRON, CNSE, CNCW unit, and FH commander are CHOP to the CMPF.
- CMPF coordinates marshalling of the NSE, the NCW unit, and other naval elements that may be attached, with the MAGTF.
- CNSE assigns personnel to the SLRP and OPP and coordinates with the MAGTF commander for marshalling and movement.
- MAGTF commander has OPCON of all assigned MAGTF elements.
- MAGTF commander assembles the SLRP and OPP for movement.
- MAGTF commander coordinates, assembles, and supports airlift of the MPF FIE with AMC and the tanker airlift control element (TALCE) via the supporting FMCC departure airfield control group (DACG) at the APOE.
- COMPSRON continues coordination with the MAGTF commander and the CMPF.

Movement Phase

- CMPF coordinates movement of the MPSRON.
- MAGTF commander coordinates movement of all FIE elements.

Arrival and Assembly Phase

- MAGTF commander retains OPCON of all MAGTF elements and provides forces TACON to or in support of the CMPF for the offload.
- CMPF retains OPCON of assigned Navy elements and the MPSRON and conducts offload operations according to the MAGTF commander's priorities.
- FH commander, upon offload and staffing, becomes OPCON to the theater naval component commander (NCC) who is responsible for its movement, set-up, and support.
- CNSE conducts the ship-to-shore movement of MPE/S.
- MAGTF commander is responsible for the throughput of MPE/S from the beach and port to the unit assembly areas (UAAs).
- MAGTF commander prepares for the employment mission.

The arrival and assembly phase ends when the MAGTF commander is prepared to undertake the MAGTF employment mission. The MPF operation resumes—although reconstitution planning continues—when the MAGTF employment mission concludes and the establishing authority authorizes the MAGTF commander and CMPF to begin the reconstitution phase.

Reconstitution Phase

The MAGTF commander and the CMPF coordinate the reconstitution of the MPSRON. Reconstitution must be accomplished as efficiently and effectively as possible. The MAGTF commander and the CMPF coordinate and support the redeployment of the MPF.

MPF-related command relationships depend on who the CJCS tasks to execute the reconstitution and where it takes place. Reconstitution may occur in the AOR, outside the AOR or at an interim maintenance site. The C2 structure in reconstitution is unique because of the participation of personnel in the AOR from the operation and Navy and Marine Corps supporting establishments from CONUS. Key participants during reconstitution in the AOR will normally be the supported MARFOR responsible for the reconstitution; the MEF MPF cell; the designated CMPF; the reconstitution special purpose MAGTF (SPMAGTF)/combat service support detachment (CSSD) assigned to execute; and the TAAT provided by MARCORLOGCOM (BICmd) to assist (see ch. 8).